with apologies for the random nature of these remarks,
what probably
the mark was
you wanted me
to aim at.

Monk's House
Rodmell
near Lewes
Sussex

Miss Whatever

And what does
Alba say about the
Education?

26th Oct. 39

V.

As you'll have gathered from my wire,
we came down here, after a
ravaging but in its way rather absorbing
week in London — so many people to see:
& all the time the telephone failing, the
oven refusing to cook, a workman to
ask "where d'you want the light in
the Lavatory?" The W.C. I always
Correct them in the interests of
Democracy. ~~X~~ So I left your
letter in London. Can't remember
what precise question I was
expected to answer about your
article. Was it whether you were
Parodying your own style?
Well. I think my observation
would be that, wishing I suppose
for your favourable Everyman, you

dissipate your forces a little to the
distraction of that eccentric individual
V. W. I see the attraction – I can't
imitate it – or the personal style – "my
head's too large for my hat – my happy ...
my" this that the other. And I envy
you the abandon with which you can toss
all your [illegible] private – no, I mean personal –
trinkets at the reader's feet. But it a little
blocks the road to the final grasp on the
theme. The hat obscures eyes and throat.
And, absorbed in the humours of the omnibus –
inch, I mean and flies off at a tangent: which
in a short article, leaves one too little to
perch upon. But then, cut out. Ethel, –
the broth would miss its savoury. So I
should advise concentration rather than
elimination. I venture that the amateur
author feels the drag of the public more
than the old hack: hence this Miltonism:
hence also this charm. But is that true? –
do you I mean feel when you write that the
curtain rises & the stage is lit? – so
increase, unintentionally, your gesticulations?
Anyhow I enjoyed it: rare in an article: –
here I turn it,

Rota 2. V. 23

But shall be more wearable ma Thursday the wood, shore a resident maid perhaps, so that I needn't cook dinner & cut long arguments. Oh yes, the waits are to boil potatoes & bake pies.

Monks House
Rodmell Lewes,
Sussex 22nd Dec 39

~~Dec~~ 1939

No, I never began a letter dearest Ethel, as my pen intended. And have been darting about London so violently, & oh dear correcting Mss. so incessantly. that I never could sit down & write. Allow for the intermittens & the pen, & don't blame 'em on the heart. Maynard says he's cured by Bleech — are you? The last visit I was (yours truly) broken off. if you remember, to visit him — Bleb I mean. Oh no I wanted to throw my cap over the roofree by way of shouting Hurrah to your Finis. But that — a Triumph — the last word, no matter

Jingling, so do I wish you peace, virtue & love me another year or two.
V.

what agony + drudgery have gone before. Never have
I written it save with tears + sweat. Now
when shall I read the whole? + shall I
halt it to the shelf where, to relax —
support restless nights () mean starts +
terrified about nothing waking when even the
Swan through the apple tree mock + diminish) —
the shelf where I keep him? Yes. I expect so. And
little though I shall care across the Styx to
justify my life here, that one bright deed
shall shine like a medal, or a wound, to show
Queen that I, Virginia, kept Ethel at bay. For,
though you don't honour me much, you must
admit that. Thank God, we're out of
London, + in country a few, alone, this
frosty night. Your joke about Eddy
Sackville + his neck had fails to
score. Did I ask him? No. He
leapt at a vague hint + pressed me down. I never
"ask" anyone. Sometimes very persistent people I've
quarrelled with + half-made-up with, like
Eddy say Let's forget + be friends.

NYPL

Rota 2-V-63

16th Jan. 1940 37 Mecklenburgh Sq.

I'm sorry I didn't answer your question, & the second letter has gone round by Mr. H: so that why I'm late.

I say that though the price of novels is being raised this is far has made no difference to the author's royalties. Certainly you ought not to get less: indeed probably authors may in time demand more. To stick to what you had for the last ~~so far as only novels that are selling in print~~ but it up for the usual

NYPL

4 hectic hectic days, & very cold, but not quite so
cold as the country.

Are you praying Worthy? such I said I would —
Vanessa Reading I mean: & will borrow your copy perhaps
one of these days. But, tho' I wrote Vera a
letter of 16 I didn't somehow enjoy it wholly like her
Potato letter. I didn't somehow enjoy it wholly like her
Life: two petty & those horrid Silver Queen's Jenip:
She had a good deal more to her that V. B. saw,
& was no more a writer (to my mind) than a
barrel organ is a String Quartet. But it
was a scrambling jumping alternate book: & W. H deserved
a ballet.

Now Hugh walks on me; & I must —
have breakfast to-day I'm a Song for your book.
— V.

Back to M.H. on Friday.

Rota 2.4.63

Monk's House
Rodmell
near Lewes
Sussex

18 Feb 40

Yes, I'd like to look at South Riding, it's no trouble to you to lend it on. I think I meant that W. H. was a barrel organ writer. Vera is a scrambling & enthusing Challenger, but of course very conscient. I'm judging W.H. only on her journalism — & she insisted to me that that was all she ever wanted to do — & the book on me, which I felt to be a painstaking effort rather to clear up her own muddles than to let the hang of mine. But I don't want to be written about (not personally) & do never did more than whip through it with one eye shut. I don't like pulling out all the organ stops & 'humanising': I don't like regional novels: I am my prejudices, & I much prefer people who let all that settle down (like Hardy, like Tolstoy) & only write when the sediment is firm &

the water clear. Therefore I'm not likely to be fair in W.H. And oh Lord how I loathe that
scrubbing business: 35 novels to be reviewed for
Harben Bazaar in one morning in a bungalow.
So I'm not ~~hoping~~ unprejudiced, but with fingers to.
Here we are snow bound. All engagements in a
muddle. We tried to go, but the car frozen. The
roads impossible. I should be listening to
Desire under the Elms this moment. Never was
there such a medieval winter. The electricity
broke down. We cooked over the fire. Cds remained
unwashed. Slept in stockings & mufflers. And
what about you?

I'm using this frozen pause to confront a long
cast friend at R.F. When it'll be done. Out
Sowden knows when. The family has to pass it.
Endless objections I foresee. And as novel
book, only, pièce de cabinet making, & only
of interest to R's friends, for whom I've
tried to stick together an amalgamation of
his letters. And what a job to do! And as of no
interest that I can see, & left to his half dozen
devotees. Never mind - I've learnt a carpenter's
trick or two.

Reading Burke. Reading Gide.
& I have to lecture on the moderns to the
working classes at
Buxton. V.

Rota 2.4.63

NYPL

Monks Moure, 9th Feb. 1940

X That was a nice long letter, & now the fat book has
Come. I think (so far) she has a photographic mind, a
Royal Academician mind. It's as bright as paint, but
how obvious, how like this; not beneath the skin.
That's why it rattles on so, I think. She's never pulled
up by a single original idea. She's seen nothing
for the first time, for herself. I feel, as I do when
God Save the King strikes up, that I could sing the
whole book straight through. But then I'd just
remember Letts Agenda. And it's not fair perhaps.
He rattles along, but has muscular, hard positive,
& what a ripple of bone & contrail & Lenein
under that taut surface. But again that
surface, — I've only read 150 pages: & enjoyed them, as one

Dear a film. She's a ventriloquist extra ordinary. Somehow, of course, she has the very words. But they don't come from the heart. X Well — this is described by way of a cut from connecting Roger French — that described his accents, & I daresay the wrong genders: as my own French is as mouldy as the dungeon Castle — the walls oozing from the bricks now, — oh damn this thaw — the howling wild Cry aloud, & make poisoned darts in all the furious & vindictive old men. Here we have Entertaining the local Gentry — a mild eyed, sheep witted Major who works in about Singapore & loves rats, which he feeds, & his daughter (painter) & Son (bank clerk) & now & we have a meeting to debate Socialism ~~in our~~. X Rather at times long for the dry & flickering streets & even old Ethel. A joke that, in bad taste. So, as my woollen socks are bad, I will stop — X

Y.

Rota 2.41